

## Message Text

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: OEXC, UR

SUBJECT:LITERATURE SEMINAR

REF: A. MOSCOW 10104 B. MOSCOW 11853

1. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A CONCRETE PROPOSAL TO BE MADE TO THE JOURNAL OF FOREIGN LITERATURE ON HOLDING SOVIET-US LITERATURE SEMINAR IN THE US SOMETIME IN FEBRUARY. THE US HOST ORGANIZATION WILL BE EITHER THE KENNAN INSTITUTE JOINTLY WITH A PROMINENT LITERARY MAGAZINE, OR, IF NECESSARY, THE KENNAN INSTITUTE ACTING ALONE.

2. WE ARE AWARE THAT THE EMBASSY MAY HAVE SOME MISGIVINGS ABOUT HAVING THE KENNAN INSTITUTE SERVE AS HOST. HOWEVER, WE FACE HERE THE PROBLEM OF FINDING AN ORGANIZATION BOTH WILLING AND ABLE TO ORGANIZE SUCH A SEMINAR. THE INSTITUTE IS ADMIRABLY SUITED IN BOTH REGARDS. FURTHER, IT IS SUFFICIENTLY PRESTIGIOUS TO DRAW THE BEST AMERICAN WRITERS AND CRITICS INTO PARTICIPATION. IF ONE OF OUR  
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LITERARY MAGAZINES SHOULD AGREE TO CO-HOST (STARR OF THE

INSTITUTE LEANS TOWARD THE SATURDAY REVIEW AS THE BEST CANDIDATE), THIS WILL SERVE TO ADD SOME LUSTER IN SOVIET EYES AS WELL.

3. BRIEFLY, WE ENVISAGE THE SEMINAR AS BEING PART OF A TOTAL PROGRAM WHICH WOULD PROVIDE TRAVEL TO AREAS WHICH HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE SUCH AS MARK TWAIN'S HANNIBAL, FAULKNER'S MISSISSIPPI, AND OTHER REGIONS WHICH WOULD GIVE THE SOVIETS A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF US LITERARY ROOTS. THIS PERIOD OF TRAVEL WOULD BE INTERRUPTED AFTER ABOUT TEN DAYS FOR A TWO DAY SEMINAR IN WASHINGTON WITH A LIKE NUMBER OF AMERICAN WRITERS AND SPECIALISTS. THE SOVIET GROUP WOULD THEN RETURN TO THEIR TRAVELS IN THE US, THIS TIME CONCENTRATING ON OUR INTELLECTUAL CENTERS AND UNIVERSITIES.

4. WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT BOTH SOVIET AND US DELEGATIONS BE LIMITED TO SEVEN PERSONS EACH, CONSISTING OF THREE WRITERS (PROSE), TWO SPECIALISTS IN THE LITERATURE OF THE OTHER COUNTRY, AND TWO SPECIALISTS REPRESENTING LITERARY JOURNALS, CRITICS OR PUBLISHERS.

5. THE SEMINAR WOULD OPEN WITH DISCUSSION OF THE WORKS OF THE WRITERS ATTENDING THE SEMINAR. (WE ARE LOOKING INTO POSSIBILITY OF ASKING EACH SIDE TO PROVIDE A SHORT STORY OR EXCERPT, NO MORE THAN 50 TYPED PAGES DOUBLE SPACED, FROM THE WORKS OF EACH WRITER ATTENDING THE SEMINAR; THESE WORKS WOULD BE TRANSLATED BY THE OTHER SIDE TO SERVE AS FOOD FOR DISCUSSION.) IT WOULD THEN MOVE INTO BROADER TOPICS OF LITERARY FORM AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF LITERATURE TO SOCIETY. THIS LATTER TOPIC COULD INTRODUCE SOME CONTROVERSY INTO THE DISCUSSIONS, BUT WE DOUBT THAT SUCH CONTROVERSY COULD BE AVOIDED IN ANY CASE, AND TO ATTEMPT TO INSULATE THE SEMINAR FROM THE REAL WORLD AROUND IT WOULD ADVANCE NO ONE'S CAUSE. WE OF COURSE WOULD EXPECT THAT ANY CONTROVERSY WOULD BE HANDLED IN A REASONABLE AND OBJECTIVE MANNER ON BOTH SIDES.

6. WE ARE INVESTIGATING FUNDING FOR THE SEMINAR, AND THE KENNAN INSTITUTE WILL BE ATTEMPTING TO LINE UP A CO-HOST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND TO GET SOME FEEL FOR WHICH PROMINENT US LITERARY FIGURES WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTEND. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CLEAR UP THESE QUESTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AND AT THAT TIME WILL BE SENDING THE EMBASSY A MORE DETAILED PROPOSAL. KISSINGER

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